

Operation Night Light did succeed in giving more meaning to probationary sentences and curfew, as well as the importance of curfew enforcement. One Boston police detective said, “I’ve seen gangs decimated from a particular neighborhood only because of supervised curfews and area restrictions” (Karp & Clear 2002). It is believed that residents’ feeling of safety is generally increased by knowing that probation officers are actually present during these later hours to actively ensure that the rules are being followed. Also, the frequent face-to-face contact that officers had with those youth on probation, instilled in them a more genuine feeling of being supervised which contributed to their adherence to the program, as well as encouraged future youth to adhere (2002).

Other factors that contributed to the community-wide success during this time were the expansion of a summer job program which gave part-time employment to youth who successfully completed the program, and a coalition of clergy members who were able to get some gang youth involved in church-based programs.

E. ACT Now

The ACT Now program began in 1994 to address the truancy problem in Pima County, AZ. This was a densely populated county including the city of Tucson, which accounted for more than half of Arizona’s chronic truanies in the years before the program (Baker et al., 2001). This program was primarily run by the Pima County Attorney’s Office (PCAO), which recognized truancy as a major problem and recommended the program as an intervention tactic. The PCAO partnered closely with the school system and created a Center for Juvenile Alternatives (CJA) to assist students and parents in realizing the dangers of truancy and to get parents more involved in their child’s activities.

Having established this organizational framework, the program consisted of the following steps. After the first unexcused absence, a letter is sent